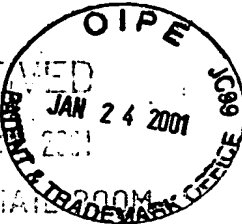


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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s): MATSUMOTO, et al

Serial No.: 09/665,694

Filed: September 20, 2000

For: NEAR-FIELD OPTICAL PROBE, NEAR-FIELD OPTICAL MICROSCOPE AND OPTICAL RECORDING/REPRODUCING DEVICE WITH NEAR-FIELD OPTICAL PROBE

Group:

Examiner:

#8/A
PRE-AMDT
J. Mcmillan
5/14/01

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

January 24, 2001

Sir:

The following preliminary amendments and remarks are respectfully submitted in connection with the above-identified application.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 6 and 7 as follows:

6. (amended) A near-field optical probe, comprising[:]
a substrate[; a first] on which a metallic film having a
pointed tip end[; and a second] and a metallic film [in]
having an arbitrary contour[, wherein the] are formed for
generating a plasmon resonance, in which an interval between